

## 12.305 HAZARDOUS MATERIALS (HAZMAT) INCIDENTS AND NUCLEAR, BIOLOGICAL, CHEMICAL THREAT RESPONSE

### ***Reference:***

Procedure 12.145 - Critical Incident Response  
Procedure 12.170 - Civil Disturbance Operation  
Procedure

### ***Purpose:***

To guide Department personnel in the event of:

- Hazardous Material Incidents
- Nuclear, Biological, Chemical Agent Incidents

To provide for the integration of the Fire Department, local, state, and federal agencies with Department personnel.

### ***Policy:***

The first priority at the scene of a hazardous material or biological threat incident is to prevent and/or limit exposure to yourself and the public.

Fire Department personnel have the primary role and authority in all HAZMAT and Nuclear, Biological, and Chemical (NBC) Incidents. Upon arrival, Fire Department personnel will establish operational zones (red, yellow and green) and determine the need for outside agency involvement other than law enforcement.

Operational zones during NBC Incidents are defined as follows:

#### A. Green Zone

1. Indicates areas of the City not contaminated by NBC materials.
2. Normal activities will continue within this zone, although operations may be modified as the City-wide situation escalates and various criteria are implemented.

## B. Yellow Zone

1. Indicates area immediately surrounding contaminated area and deemed likely to become contaminated.
2. Police Department personnel will not enter this zone until cleared by a Fire Department monitoring team.
3. Closely monitor personnel safety operations with caution being exercised during all activities.

## C. Red Zone

1. Indicates areas where NBC contamination is known to be occurring.
2. Police Department personnel will not enter this zone until cleared by a Fire Department monitoring team.

### ***Information:***

Incidents involving hazardous materials and threats to disseminate biological agents have occurred throughout the United States.

Many bacteria, fungi, viruses, rickettsial agents and toxins are possible biological warfare agents. Despite the very different characteristics of these organisms, viruses and toxins, biological agents used as weapons share some common characteristics. They can be dispersed in aerosols of particle size one to five micrometers (microns), which may remain suspended (in certain weather conditions) for hours and if inhaled will penetrate deep into the lungs of victims. Particles larger than five microns tend to be filtered out in the upper airway. The aerosols may be delivered by simple technology, including industrial sprayers with nozzles modified to generate the smaller particle size. Other possible routes of exposure for biological agents include oral, by intentional contamination of food and water, and percutaneous (skin contact). In general, these other routes of exposure are considered less important than the respiratory route. Diseases produced by the offensive use of biological agents could be lethal and/or disabling.

Hazardous Materials incidents encompass a wide variety of potential situations including fires, spills, transportation accidents, explosions, and similar events. Hazards involved may include toxicity, flammability, radiological hazards, corrosives, explosives, health hazards, chemical reactions, and combinations of factors.

***Procedure:***

- A. Hazardous Material (HAZMAT) and Nuclear, Biological, and Chemical (NBC) Incidents
  - 1. Indication of hazardous materials may include:
    - a. Markings or placards/labels on the exterior of the vehicle
    - b. Exposed container showing HAZMAT markings or labels
  - 2. On scene police officer(s) will:
    - a. Immediately contact Police Communications Section (PCS) and inform them of the situation.
    - b. If a HAZMAT or NBC material is suspected to be involved, toxic fumes may also be a result. Officer(s) will immediately respond to an area upwind and uphill (if possible) from the location.
    - c. Notify any bystanders to evacuate the area downwind from the location. Use the police vehicle's public address system if needed. (Shut off ventilation system in car from outside air).
    - d. If a gas cloud, leaking liquid or a fire is present, approach the immediate scene only if absolutely necessary, and only from the upwind and uphill side.
    - e. No attempt will be made by the officer(s) to examine or otherwise disturb the material until cleared by a Fire Department monitoring team.

## 3. PCS will:

- a. Inform the Fire dispatcher that a suspected HAZMAT or NBC material has been found and request the Fire Department dispatch the necessary equipment.
- b. Dispatch a district supervisor to the scene.

## 4. The supervisor will:

- a. Respond to the scene and meet with the ranking supervisor of the Fire Department, evaluate the situation and determine the seriousness of the incident and a course of action.
  - 1) Request PCS to dispatch the District Officer-in-Charge (OIC) to the scene for serious incidents.
- b. Coordinate all Police Department activities with those of the Fire Department and all local, state, and federal agencies and keep PCS informed of the situation.
  - 1) During the isolation stage of a hazardous materials incident, the Police Department's main function will be traffic control and preventing unauthorized persons from entering the hazard area.
  - 2) All traffic posts will be set within the Green Zone area unless otherwise determined by a supervisor.
  - 3) Any officer experiencing a physical reaction (difficulty breathing, light-headedness, etc.) will immediately leave the area and seek medical assistance. Notify Fire Department OIC of the medical condition.
- c. Brief the District OIC upon his/her arrival.

- d. Complete a Form 17 After Action Report, directed through channels to the Police Chief, giving an account of the incident and the action taken.
5. Fire Department will:
- a. The Fire Department OIC will be the incident commander and will determine the evacuation of personnel, the blocking of areas and the retention of people who may have been affected by hazardous materials. Assistance will be provided by the Police Department.
  - b. The Fire Department OIC will hand over only properly packed, safe material, to Police Department Personnel.
  - c. Police Department Personnel will:
    - 1) Make a notation on the Form 330 and the evidence envelope/bag "Hazardous Material Packaged By:" (place name of Fire Department officer releasing the property).
    - 2) Place a "Biohazard" sticker on the evidence envelope/bag and seal with evidence tape. Date and initial the seal to maintain chain of custody.
    - 3) Process the evidence through the Court Property Unit (CPU). Indicate evidence requiring analysis via an Evidence Submission Sheet.
    - 4) CPU will transport the evidence for analysis using their current Chain of Custody Standard Operating Procedure (S.O.P.).
      - a) The evidence will be transported by CPU to the Ohio Department of Health, 1571 Perry Street, Columbus, Ohio on an as-needed basis.
    - 5) Evidence and analysis records will be maintained at Court Property Unit.

d. As soon as it has been ascertained that hazardous materials are involved, the ranking on scene Fire Department officer will establish the operational zones as follows:

1) Red Zone

a) Limit entry to Fire personnel who are adequately protected.

2) Yellow Zone

a) Triage and transfer area

b) Contaminated civilian assembly area

c) Decontamination area

3) Green Zone

a) Command Posts and staging areas

e. Notify all local, state, and federal agencies needed to assist in the incident, including the City Health Commissioner.

6. City Health Department will:

a. Upon arrival, the Health Commissioner or his representative will assume responsibility for the disposition of persons being retained or others who have been affected.

b. After the initial emergency period has expired, the Health Department will assume responsibility for the supervision of the decontamination of any persons involved and not otherwise disposed of, and the affected area including the buildings.

c. Health Department representatives will be responsible for making the statements as to the seriousness of the situation and any other acts which are necessary for public dissemination. Any persons making the initial response to the call will limit statements only to the fact that hazardous materials are involved.

B. Biological Threats (i.e. anthrax threats)

1. Immediately advise Police Communications Section after receiving a biological threat.
2. PCS will:
  - a. Advise Fire dispatch of the incident and request them to dispatch the necessary personnel and equipment.
  - b. Dispatch four units and a supervisor to the scene.
    - 1) All officers will remain outside the affected building or area and shall not have any face to face contact with persons inside the affected building or area.
3. Police officer(s) will:
  - a. Cordon off the affected building or area and establish a perimeter.
  - b. Allow no one inside the affected area or to have contact with persons who are or have been inside that area.
4. Supervisor will:
  - a. Evaluate the situation and request PCS to dispatch the necessary personnel.
  - b. Any officers inside the building when a device or agent is found shall remain in the containment area.
  - c. If a letter is involved, only those people who had contact with the opened letter need to be isolated. Direct the reporting person to place the letter and envelop in a sealable bag or container to limit further exposure.
  - d. Notify Intelligence Unit of the incident if occurring between 0800 and 1700 hours on weekdays.
  - e. If during other hours, notify the Night Chief or the Duty Officer who will recall the Intelligence Unit Commander.

5. The Intelligence Unit will:
  - a. Coordinate the investigation and evaluate the information in terms of providing intelligence to affected units or agencies.